WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Modernisation of the Signalling and Telecommunication System on Delhi Mughalsarai section

*361. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways propose to upgrade and modernise the signalling and telecommunication system on Delhi-Mughalsarai section of Northern Railway;

(b) if so, the approximate expenditure thereof; and

(c) the target for completion of the project?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The works for replacement, modernisation and upgradation of the Signalling and Telecommunication system on Delhi-Mughalsarai section are estimated to cost approximately Rs. 520 Crore, of this about Rs. 61 Crore expenditure has so far been incurred.

(c) The Signalling and Telecommunication works in Delhi-Kanpur section are expected to be completed in 4 years' time frame. The Signalling and Telecommunication works in Kanpur-Mughalsarai section too will be progressed concurrently and shall be completed in about 4 years subject to availability of funds.

Cashew Cultivation

*365. SHRI V. V. RAGHAVAN:
SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what steps have been taken by Government to extend the areas under Cashew cultivation in various States; and

(b) what measures were taken to replant the areas already under Cashew cultivation, with hybrid seeds and plants?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) The Government has been providing assistance to the State Governments since the Eighth Five Year Plan under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Integrated

Development Programme of Cashew & Cocoa for extending the area under cashew by raising new plantations with improved high yielding varieties. The Scheme was continued during the Ninth Plan. The cashew development programmes have been subsumed under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Macro Management in Agriculture Supplementation/Complementation of States' Efforts through Work Plans from October, 2000. Till 2000-01, about 1.4 lakh hectares have been brought under new cashew plantations in various States.

(b) Assistance was provided to the State Governments for replanting of senile cashew plantations with improved high yielding varieties. So far about 48,000 hectares of senile cashew plantations have been replanted with improved varieties.

Gauge conversion work of Lumding-Badarpur-Silchar Section

*366. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether gauge conversion work in Lumding-Badarpur-Silchar section of NF Railway is on progress;

(b) if so, on which date the work has initiated and the probable date by which the work is likely to be completed;

(c) whether the work is proceeding as per schedule; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor and the steps to be taken to expedite for completion of the work?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a)Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The work was included in the Budget 1996-97. No target date of completion has yet been fixed. The work is in progress and would be completed as per availability of resources.

Archaeological site beneath Gulf of Cambay

*367. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of OCEAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether an ancient Harappa like archaeological site, dating back to about 4000 B.C., has been discovered beneath the Gulf of Cambay;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and